

XXII. EXTRACTS *from the* MINUTE-BOOK *of the* LINNEAN SOCIETY *of* LONDON.

Dec. 6, 1808. THE Treasurer communicated a letter from the Rev. William Bingley, F.L.S., giving an account of his having taken *Forficula gigantea* of Fabricius on the West Beach near Christchurch, on the 7th of July last.

Mr. Bingley states, that as he was walking on the Beach just at the close of the evening, he saw two or three large insects running along the sand, about or rather below high-water mark, and from their size and manner he took them to be young Mole Crickets. Surprised at seeing such insects in that situation, he examined them as well as the light would permit, and, by their immense forceps and size, found them to be a species of *Forficula* hitherto undescribed as British. He took home some specimens, and ascertained them to be the *Forficula gigantea* of Fabricius. From subsequent observations he concludes that these insects seldom or never quit their hiding-places in the daytime. A friend of Mr. Bingley's sought for them afterwards in the same place, and found a great number concealed under large stones about the sands. Mr. Bingley sometimes put three or four together into his box; and the consequence was, that one of them was frequently devoured by the rest. In their habits these insects greatly resemble the common Earwig; but when approached they turn  
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up their abdomen in the manner of the large Staphylini, bending the extremity quite over the head, which they defend by means of their enormous forceps. The largest he could procure was nearly fifteen lines in length, exclusive of the antennæ, which measured somewhat more than half an inch.

Nov. 7, Mr. Sowerby, F.L.S. communicated the following account of a remarkable stone, known by the name of the Blowing-Stone, on the road from Farringdon to Uffington, in Berkshire.

The Blowing-Stone is placed near the front of a little public-house, to which it gives its name. It is an unwrought Sand-stone, about three feet high, three feet wide, and nearly eighteen inches in thickness, having natural perforations. One of these perforations begins at the upper end on one side, and passes to the other side a little lower down. It is eighteen inches in length, about an inch in diameter at the upper end, and nearly two inches at the lower; thus forming a tube like a horn, and when filled with wind sounds like one, and may be heard at a considerable distance. Any one used to blowing a horn can sound it. Mr. Sowerby has not been able to determine whether these perforations were caused by roots of trees or by an animal; but he concludes that they have been formed in the same manner as those observed in some of the Sand-stone found on Marlborough Downs.

Mr. Sowerby also communicated the following account of a pit about two miles from Farringdon, commonly called the Farringdon Gravel Pit.

“ This pit is of a nature not yet described, being a rock

composed of petrified animal remains, which agree in structure much better with the Alcyoniums than with any thing else I can recollect. The rock exposes some hundreds of yards of strata and surface; and, being chiefly composed of heaps on heaps of these substances, is truly curious. It is cemented together by brown and reddish oxide of iron, which often covers the animal remains in a peculiar manner with a fine crust of spiculæ, giving a velvety lustre to them when the light catches on their shining sides. Besides these Zoophytes there are remarkable Belemnites, mostly worn; and a stratum about an inch thick, that presents little else than spines of Echini. There are also some Nautili, and small pebbles of every description, to be found in this rock."

Mar. 6, Read the following Observations on some Plants of the 1811. *Flora Japonica*, by A. B. Lambert, Esq. V.P.L.S.

Mr. Lambert having lately received a collection of specimens of plants from Japan, and another from Egypt, he has been enabled to determine two species of plants belonging to the genus *Mimosa* of Linn. which have hitherto remained doubtful among botanists. One is the *Mimosa Lebeck* of Linn. found by Hasselquist, who describes it in the *Act. Ups.* 1750. p. 9. *It.* 473. "foliis pinnatis" instead of foliis bipinnatis; which has caused the mistakes of subsequent writers on that genus. Jacquin was the first who made this plant a new species under the name of *Mimosa speciosa*. This name has been taken up in the first edition of the *Hortus Kewensis*, and Willdenow in his *Species Plant.* has called it *Acacia speciosa*; but from Mr. Lambert's specimens it is evident that *Acacia speciosa* and *Acacia Lebeck* Willd. are the same plant. The other is the

the plant which is described by Thunberg in his *Flora Japon.* under the name of *Mimosa arborea*, first shown to be an error by the late Mr. Dryander in *Kæmpf. Icon. Select.* published by Sir Joseph Banks. Thunberg afterwards, in his paper on Japan plants in the second volume of the *Trans. Linn. Soc.*, named it *Mimosa speciosa*. Willdenow in his edition of *Species Plant.* calls it *Acacia Nemu*; he appears to have made his description from Kæmpfer's figure, and places it in the genus next to his *Acacia Julibrissen*. The Japan specimens in Mr. Lambert's possession prove that the *Mimosa Julibrissen* of the *Hort. Kew.*, the *Acacia Julibrissen* of Willdenow *Sp. Plant.*, and the *Acacia Nemu* of the same author, are all the same plant.

The figure in Gmelin's *Travels*, vol. iii. p. 372, pl. 40, which he calls there *Mimosa arborea*, seems not to have been quoted by any of the editors of the *Species Plantarum*, except Richard, who has taken it up as *Mimosa Lebeck* with a doubt. Having found very fine specimens of Gmelin's plant in Pallas's Herbarium, sent to him by Gmelin, and from which his figure was drawn; Mr. Lambert has been enabled to determine it to be *Mimosa Julibrissen* of Linn. *Hort. Kew.* ed. 1, and *Acacia Julibrissen* of Linn. *Species Plantarum* by Willdenow.

*Hypoxis spicata* of Thunberg's *Flor. Japonica*, which is *Aletris farinosa* of the same author in the second volume of the *Trans. Linn. Soc.*, is a new species, and Thunberg's specific character sufficiently distinguishes it from the Linnean plant, to which at first sight it seems nearly allied. Mr. Lambert therefore calls it *Aletris Japonica*.